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Mr. Gould's conception of "Mephistopheles," notwithstanding the arguments set forth in its favor, I consider to be false. We are taught by Holy Writ that Mephistopheles was a fallen angel, and not, as the artist would have us believe, "a child of the underworld." Taking this last view, however, Mr. Gould has given us the head of a man of strong intellectual power and ability, but there is a lack of wicked and fiendish expression in the face which would lead us to consider Mephistopheles a statesman or a member of Congress, rather than the Prince of Evil. Added to this there is an openness and honesty in the smile which is at total variance from the character represented. Novelty in art, as well as in other things, is doubtless desirable, but then, and in art particularly, it should possess some degree of truth, and this Mr. Gould's Mephistopheles does not, and while one may praise his originality, he cannot but avoid condemning an originality which is sensational rather than correct.

Of the other two busts, the best is "Imogen," there is considerable beauty and dignity about the face, while the execution of it is careful and artistic. The "Childhood" is not so good, the title being evidently a misnomer, as all the lines and expression of the face tend to impress one with the idea of Youth—and precocious Youth at that—rather than the innocence and simplicity of Childhood.

Wust has established his studio at 82 Fifth Avenue, and proposes to shortly give an exhibition of pictures of Norwegian scenery which he has painted since his absence from New York. Mr. Wust has been gaining great honors abroad, having won the gold medals of the Hague and Brussels exhibitions, which is no small distinction. The picture for which he won the Hague medal is entitled "A Mountain Torrent in Norway," a fierce, seething, hurrying mass of water, dashing along over huge rocks and bespattering them with spray—in the distance a gloomy looking shore, while over all looms a lurid and threatening sky, which adds, if possible, still more to the impressiveness and awe inspiring grandeur of the picture. The dash and hurry of the water is painted with wonderful fidelity, while the whole effect of the picture shows evidences of a master hand.

J. G. Brown is at work on an exquisite *genre* picture which he calls "In Ambush." A bright-eyed little girl has escaped from her play-fellows and is hiding in the shadow of a luxuriant clump of foliage, the sunlight breaking through the leaves plays upon her face and figure and lights up the coy, mischievous sparkle of her eyes, while over all is thrown such a feeling of genuine, innocent, mirthful childhood that one cannot fail loving and admiring it. Mr. Brown has treated his subject with consummate skill, some of the foliage and flesh painting displaying a delicacy and finish which are exquisitely delightful.

W. N. Beard is at work on another of his intensely humorous animal pictures which is to be called "Raining Cats and Dogs," the down pouring of the canine population is something really appalling.

Gifford has just finished a large picture of the Adirondacks, and is now at work on a smaller production which he calls "Late Autumn on the

Bronx," a beautiful effect of hazy, smoky atmosphere, resembling McEntee somewhat in style, but possessing that richness and glowing colors for which Gifford is so justly celebrated.

Now that the merry Christmas season is upon us the picture dealers are bringing forth their greatest treasures, and their shops resound to the ringing laughter and musical voices of happy maidens, while the evergreens around the frames give forth an almost imperceptible Christmas odor—Gifford's, Martin's, Whittredge's, Hows', Lambinet's, Melsonier's and Tissot's look down from their golden borders on would-be purchasers—and as the notes of preparation are sounding forth and the gleeful chimes are ringing out upon the midnight air, permit me, sweet and gentle reader, to wish thee a very, very happy Christmas!

PALETTA.

LITERARY MATTERS.

"ALE, IN PROSE AND VERSE." By BARRY GRAY and JOHN SAVAGE.

The fame of John Taylor and Sons' Albany Ale is almost world wide, and the Messrs. Taylor having amassed considerable wealth are enabled to employ the services of a clever poet and a distinguished *litterateur* to sing and give forth to the world its many merits. The book under notice is little more nor less than an advertisement of the Albany Imperial Ale, but it is such an ingeniously and cleverly written and constructed advertisement that we cannot refrain from noticing it in our columns.

Barry Gray's poem, which he calls "a Runlet of Ale," is a genial, lively, humorous affair, full of many pretty conceits and characterized by an undercurrent of sentiment which renders it at times perfectly delicious. Here is a stanza replete with quiet humor and drollery.

The Frenchman may declare in favor
Of wines which *la belle France* bestows,
Praise Heidsick's champagne for its flavor,
And quite adore *la Veuve* Cliquot's.
What if the Turk o'er sherbet lingers!
Oscanyan kept it once for sale
In his bazaar—Allah! his fingers
Now oftener clasp our mugs of ale.

Barry Gray is evidently fully impressed with the great value to the human system of a perpetual imbibation of "Taylor"; and we don't know but what he is right, for Taylor's Ale is at least pure, which is much more than can be said for many of the other popular beverages of the day. Thus our poet carols forth his sage words of advice.

'Tis bl'the, Tom, in the early morning,
To drain a pint of Taylor's brew,
And woe to him who dares, with scorning,
At noon to take aught else in lieu:
And then, when evening shadows lengthen,
No other tankard should prevail,
While still the day worn frame to strengthen,
At night 'tis good to quaff more ale.

With the following stanza we must leave him. He has reached his sixth mug—and as the genial brew is mounting to his brain he sees once more the happy days of youth and revels in his boyish dreams of glory—his "poet's eye" is in a wild phrenzy rolling. In one hand is poised the foaming mug and "as he drains his draughts of

'Taylor' down" he bursts forth into the following panegyric:

And as the foaming goblets vanish,
Peace takes possession of my soul;
The world, with all its cares, I ban'sh,
And, golden-like, the moments roll.
Once more I dream the dreams of glory,
Which in my boyhood did prevail,
When life was but a fairy story,
Bright as the sparkles on the ale.

The book ends with a learned disquisition on "*Ale, Antiquarian, Historical and Literary*," by John Savage, and an account of the rise and progress of the brewery of John Taylor & Sons, with a biographical sketch of the founder, both of which papers are clever and readable.

Barry Gray's poem is illustrated by some roughly executed, but characteristic drawings by McEvin.

"THE KING'S RING." By THEODORE TILTON. Illustrated by FRANK JONES. Hurd & Houghton.

This is one of those prettily gotten up and illustrated productions with which the market abounds at this Merry Christmas season. The poem is well written and conveys a sound moral, while the illustrations and initial letters of Mr. Jones are excellent in design and execution, noticeable from the brilliancy and purity of the color printing, which was done at the establishment of Mr. Julius Bien, who, as a lithographer, is making quite a reputation for the artistic manner in which his work is executed.

"FLOWER DE LUCE." By H. W. LONGFELLOW. Ticknor & Fields.

A new collection of poems by this popular poet—whose works are always acceptable—written in his usual pleasant style and abounding in that purity of feeling and sentiment which have always rendered Mr. Longfellow's writings, eminently readable and delightful.

The illustrations by Fenn, Perkins, Waud and others, are of but a medium class and are susceptible of considerable improvement.

"STORIES OF MANY LANDS." By GRACE GREENWOOD. Ticknor & Fields.

Grace Greenwood has always been an immense favorite with the little folks, and this, her last production, will delight them more than any of her previous efforts; so look to it Paterfamilias that when your "little pet" investigates the contents of his or her stocking on Christmas morning that he, or she, finds on the very top of his, or her many treasures, the "*Stories of Many Lands*."

Madame Varian Hoffman gave a brilliant concert at New Haven on Monday evening last before an audience of nearly 2,000 people. The fair artist was enthusiastically received, and was encored in every selection. She was assisted by Messrs. Poznanski, Severini and Ed. Hoffman, whose artistic efforts added greatly to the success of the concert.

There was an inscription upon an old English church of this kind: "Beautified by Samuel Smead and Daniel Daub, church wardens."